

Message Text

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NODIS

LONDON FOR AMB, HOLD FOR SCHAUFLE; USUN FOR SCRANTON ONLY

FOLLOWING REPEAT GENEVA 9621 SENT ACTION SECSTATE 02 DEC 76

QUOTE S E C R E T GENEVA 9621

NODIS

TO THE DEPUTY SECRETARY FROM REINHARDT

DEPT PASS LONDON FOR SEITZ AND MASERU FOR AMB SCHAUFLE

E.O. 11652: XGDS-1

TAGS: PFOR, RH, UK

SUBJECT: RHODESIA CONFERENCE: CONVERSATION WITH NIGERIAN

OBSERVER ANYAOKU

1. I MET FOR AN HOUR THIS AFTERNOON WITH NIGERIAN
OBSERVER ANYAOKU. ANYAOKU WAS ACCOMPANIED BY NIGERIAN
HIGH COMMISSIONER TO TANZANIA MODIBBO.

2. I ASKED ANYAOKU FOR HIS ASSESSMENT OF WHERE THE
GENEVA CONFERENCE STANDS. WHAT WE NOT FACE. HE SAID,
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IS THE DIFFICULTY OF RECONCILING THE POSITION OF THE

RHODESIANS, WHICH HE DEFINED AS ONE IN WHICH POWER DURING THE INTERIM PERIOD WOULD BE SHARED ON A PARITY BASIS, AND THAT OF THE NATIONALISTS WHO ARE SEEKING TO HAVE FULL POWER PLACED IN THEIR HANDS. GIVEN THIS SITUATION, THE CONFERENCE SEEMED HEADED TOWARD AN IMPASSE WHICH MUST BE AVOIDED. THE CONFERENCE MUST NOW FIND SOME ARRANGEMENT FOR REMOVING POWER FROM SMITH. THE FIVE POINTS SUGGESTED ONE WAY. BUT THERE MUST BE OTHER ALTERNATIVES. ONE, HE SUGGESTED, IS FOR POWER TO BE SHARED IN TRIPARTITE FASHION INVOLVING THE BRITISH, RATHER THAN STRICTLY BETWEEN THE NATIONALISTS ON THE ONE HAND AND SMITH ON THE OTHER.

3. I COMMENDED ANYAOKU FOR THE WAY IN WHICH HE HAD DEFINED THE PROBLEM, SINCE IT SHOWED FAR MORE AWARENESS OF THE REALITIES OF THE SITUATION THAN OTHERS HAD SHOWN. USING TALKING POINTS, I SAID THAT IN OUR VIEW TWO CONCEPTS WERE ESSENTIAL IF THE GENEVA CONFERENCE IS TO SUCCEED. THERE MUST BE NEGOTIATION INVOLVING COMPROMISE; DURING THE INTERIM POWER MUST BE SHARED. I SAID THAT THE VIEW WE ARE HEARING INCREASINGLY IS THAT THERE MUST BE A COMPLETE AND IMMEDIATE TRANSFER OF POWER FROM SMITH TO THE NATIONALISTS, NOT AT INDEPENDENCE, BUT WITH THE INSTALLATION OF THE INTERIM GOVERNMENT. THIS WAS NOT THE BASIS ON WHICH THE GENEVA CONFERENCE WAS CONVENED. IT WAS CERTAINLY NOT THE BASIS ON WHICH SMITH AGREED TO MAJORITY RULE IN 24 MONTHS AND TO ATTEND THE GENEVA CONFERENCE.

4. I ALSO SAID THAT WE RECOGNIZE THAT THERE WERE MANY ALTERNATIVE PROPOSALS WHICH COULD BE PUT FORWARD AS THE BASIS FOR A SETTLEMENT THAT WOULD BE ACCEPTABLE TO THE PARTIES. WE BELIEVE THAT ALL OF THESE PROPOSALS INCLUDING THE FIVE POINTS, SHOULD BE SUBJECT TO DISCUSSION AND THAT THE FINAL SOLUTION WOULD BE BASED ON A COMPROMISE TO BE NEGOTIATED DURING THE CONFERENCE. WE COULD NOT ACCEPT, HOWEVER, THE SUGGESTION THAT THE CONFERENCE HAD MERELY CONVENED TO TURN OVER POWER COMPLETELY TO THE NATIONALISTS.

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5. ANYAOKU SAID THAT HE ACCEPTED BOTH THE CONCEPT OF NEGOTIATION AND THE IDEA OF POWER SHARING. HE SUGGESTED THAT THE CONFERENCE MIGHT PROCEED BY FIRST ATTEMPTING TO GAIN ACCEPTANCE OF THE PRINCIPLE OF POWER SHARING. ONCE THIS IS ACCEPTED, THEN IT SHOULD BE POSSIBLE TO NEGOTIATE THE DEGREE OF POWER TO BE HELD BY EACH OF THE VARIOUS PARTIES AND THE STRUCTURE TO REFLECT THAT DISTRIBUTION.

6. AT THIS POINT HIGH COMMISSIONER MODIBBO, WHO WAS PRESENT IN LAGOS NYERERE'S MEETINGS WITH OBSANANJO, INTERVENED TO REVIEW HIS INTERPRETATION OF THE HISTORICAL RECORD, WHICH WAS SIMILAR TO NYERERE'S. THE HIGH COMMISSIONER STRESSED THAT THE PATTERN WHICH NYERERE AND OTHER AFRICANS ENVISIONED WAS THE TRADITIONAL DECOLONIZATION PROCESS IN WHICH BRITAIN WOULD SUPERVISE AN INTERIM GOVERNMENT IN WHICH ACTUAL AUTHORITY RESTED WITH THE NATIONALISTS. HE CLAIMED THAT IT HAD NEVER BEEN ENVISIONED THAT THE NATIONALISTS WOULD SHARE POWER WITH SMITH AND HIS MINORITY GOVERNMENT. I IN TURN POINTED OUT THAT THE RHODESIAN SITUATION WAS IN NO WAY SIMILAR TO THAT OF OTHER FORMER COLONIES, SINCE BRITAIN DID NOT AND HAD NOT FOR SOME TIME EXERCISED POWER OR EVEN HAD A PRESENCE IN RHODESIA; THEREFORE, THE TRANSFER OF POWER WOULD HAVE TO BE MARKEDLY DIFFERENT FROM THE PROCESS THAT HAD OCCURED IN OTHER COUNTRIES.

7. AFTER A FEW MINUTES OF THIS BY NOW FAMILIAR BUT FRUITLESS DEBATE, ANYAOKU BROUGHT US BACK TO THE PRESENT BY SAYING THAT WHAT REALLY MATTERS IS AVERTING A CONFERENCE IMPASSE. REITERATING HIS ACCEPTANCE OF THE PRINCIPLE OF POWER SHARING, HE PHRASED THE PROBLEM AS FOLLOWS: "HOW MUCH POWER SHOULD BE KEPT FROM THE NATIONALISTS IN ORDER TO ALLAY THE FEARS OF THE SHITE MINORITY." AS HE UNDERSTANDS THE NATIONALISTS POSITION, THE DEGREE OF POWER TO BE PLACED IN THEIR HANDS MUST BE SUFFICIENT TO ENSURE THEIR CONTROL OVER DEVELOPMENTS DURING THE INTERIM PERIOD. IT WAS CLEAR THAT HE MEANT THE NATIONALISTS MUST HOLD PREPONDERANCE OF POWER.

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8. BEFORE PARTING, I ASKED ANYAOKU WHETHER THE ARRIVAL OF THE ZIPA CONTINGENT WOULD POSE NEW PROBLEMS FOR THE CONFERENCE. HE CONFIRMED THEIR ARRIVAL TODAY AND REPLIED THAT ZIPA'S PRESENCE MIGHT ACTUALLY MAKE THE NEGOTIATIONS PROCEED MORE SMOOTHLY SINCE NO LONGER WOULD MUGABE NEED TO REFER QUESTIONS TO MAPUTO HE FLET THAT MUGABE, BY PREVIOUSLY HAVING TO LOOK CONSTANTLY OVER HIS SHOULDER, HAD GENERALLY BEEN TEMPTED TO ERR ON THE SIDE OF EXTREMISM RATHER THAN MODERATION. AT WORST, HOWEVER, ZIPA WOULD POST NO GREATER PROBLEM FOR MUGABE OR THE CONFERENCE BY BEING PRESENT IN GENEVA.

9. WHEN I ASKED WHETHER THERE WAS ANY TRUTH TO RUMORS THAT SOME OR ALL OF ZIPA MIGHT BREAK WITH MUGABE AND JOIN SITHOLE, ANYAOKU SAID HE HAD NO INDICATION THAT

THIS MIGHT OCCUR AND THAT SINCE THEIR ARRIVAL TODAY,
ALL OF THE ZIPA CONTINGENT HAD BEEN IN CONSULTATION WITH
MUGABE.

10. COMMENT: MY CONVERSATION WITH ANYAOKU WAS FAR
MORE CONSTRUCTIVE THAN THE ONE I HAD WITH NYERERE AND
THAN WISNER'S CONVERSATION WITH CHONA IN THAT ANYAOKU
WAS AT LEAST PREPARED TO ACKNOWLEDGE THAT A SETTLEMENT
CAN ONLY GROW OUT OF NEGOTIATIONS HERE IN GENEVA.
IN ADDITION, HE RECOGNIZED THAT FOR A SETTLEMENT TO
BE ACCEPTABLE TO ALL PARTIES, IT MUST BE BASED ON THE
PRINCIPLE THAT POWER WILL BE SHARED DURING THE INTERIM
PERIOD. IT IS NOT CLEAR THAT ANYAOKU WILL PUSH THESE
POSITIONS IN OBSERVER CONSULTATIONS.

11. WHILE I WAS THANKFUL THAT ANYAOKU CUT MODIBBO
OFF IN THE MIDDLE OF HIS HARANGUE, I WAS NEVERTHELESS
ALSO STRUCK BY THE DEGREE TO WHICH NYERERE IS REWRITING
HISTORY FOR EVERYONE'S BENEFIT. ACCORDING TO MODIBBO,
NYERERE TOLD OBSANJO THAT HE WAS TAKEN COMPLETELY
BY SURPRISE WHEN IAN SMITH MADE HIS SEPT 24 SPEECH.
NYERERE HAD UNDERSTOOD SMITH AND HIS FELLOWS WOULD
RESIGN AND THE STATEMENT OF SURRENDER WOULD BE MADE BY
A NEUTRAL WHITE REGIME. THAT REGIME, AND NOT SMITH'S
GOVERNMENT, WOULD HAVE CARRIED OUT THE NEGOTIATIONS
IN GENEVA. DESPITE MY ARGUMENTS TO THE CONTRARY, IT
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IS CLEAR THAT MODIBBO - AND I WOULD SUSPECT OBSANJO -
ASSUME THAT NYERERE'S ACCOUNT OF HISTORY
IS THE CORRECT ONE. CATTO

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